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The growing strategy gap in equipment rental

How forward-thinking equipment rental companies are capturing more revenue than ever, and why others are falling behind

TURNING INSURANCE VERIFICATION INTO A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The New Rental Economy

There's a growing gap in equipment rental. Some companies are capturing more revenue than ever. Others are quietly falling behind.

It's 2026 and the equipment rental industry remains strong. Demand continues. Infrastructure spending persists. Contractors are renting more than they are owning. But inside rental organizations, the conversation has shifted — and not everyone is keeping up.

Not long ago, the model was simple. Dealers sold equipment. Customers bought and owned it. Risk transferred at the point of sale. But that model is breaking down.

The old model is fracturing because:

- Equipment costs are rising
- Ownership is harder to justify
- Utilization is unpredictable for buyers

So customers changed how they buy. They stopped buying. They started renting. Dealers didn't choose this shift — their customers forced the change.

Fleet values are higher than they were just a few years ago. Insurance deductibles have increased as asset protection continues to be a challenge. The confluence of these forces is causing legal scrutiny around contractual risk transfer to intensify. **A single uninsured loss can erase the margin from dozens of successful rentals.**

Dealers Are Now Operating Rental Businesses

This structural shift means dealers are no longer just sellers. They are now operating full rental businesses — with more customers, more transactions, and critically, more risk.

More customers across more transaction types

More recurring relationships to manage

More exposure — risk transferred back to the dealer, not the buyer

> **The business changed — but the systems didn't.**

More volume. More velocity. More risk. The operational infrastructure most rental companies rely on was built for a simpler era. The gap between what those systems can do and what today's rental market demands is widening fast.

A Widening Divide

This shift is creating a new divide in the market. On one side are operators who have retooled their processes for the rental era. On the other are those still running the same playbook they used when they were primarily selling.

LEADING OPERATORS	OPERATORS ON THE OLD MODEL
Customers verified instantly	Customers wait
Rentals approved in seconds	Teams scramble to verify insurance
Risk priced automatically	Decisions vary by location
The experience feels effortless	The experience feels inconsistent

At first, nothing feels broken for operators running the old way. The business still runs. Revenue still comes in. But over time, the cracks start to show:

- Lower utilization
- Fewer repeat customers
- Revenue that never gets captured

Meanwhile, competitors are approving instantly and capturing more per transaction. And by the time the gap is visible, it is already too late to catch up easily.

> **Growth is no longer constrained by equipment. It's constrained by trust at the moment of transaction.**

Growth still matters. However, disciplined growth now defines industry leaders — and that discipline begins in places many organizations once considered purely administrative.

The Moment That Matters: At the Counter

What actually determines who wins in the new rental market? It's not fleet size. It's not pricing strategy. It comes down to what happens in a single moment — at the counter.

> **The ability to verify and trust a customer instantly.**

This isn't theoretical. It's already happening across the market — and it's resetting what customers expect from every rental interaction they have.

Insurance Verification: The Quiet Function That Touches Everything

Insurance verification touches every rental, every asset, and every customer. For decades, it has been treated as process hygiene — collect a certificate, review it quickly, store it, move on. The objective was compliance.

But compliance alone does not protect margin. It does not create revenue either. Manual verification introduces blind spots: policies lapse during the rental period, or coverage limits may not align with rental requirements. The consequences rarely appear all at once. They accumulate quietly through uncovered losses and operational delays that compound across thousands of rental agreements.

Day in the Life: Old vs. New Experience

OLD EXPERIENCE	NEW EXPERIENCE
Customer walks in needing equipment now	Customer walks in — recognized instantly
Insurance needs to be manually reviewed	Insurance already verified in the system
There's a delay — the customer waits	The right decision happens automatically
A manual, inconsistent decision is made	Transaction completes — fast and confident

They don't just rent faster. They trust faster. When you can verify instantly, you can price risk in real time. That single capability unlocks both protection and revenue that the old model cannot access.

The Revenue Hidden Inside Insurance Verification

Most companies think insurance verification is about risk. It's actually one of the largest untapped revenue streams in the rental business.

Here's what most companies don't see: The majority of rental customers don't meet insurance requirements. Not 10%. Not 25%.

75%+

of rental customers fail to meet insurance requirements

That means 75% of your customers don't meet requirements — and 75% represent a direct pricing opportunity. That's not just risk. **That's opportunity.**

Loss Damage Waivers and Protection Plans represent meaningful, high-margin revenue streams. Yet attachment is frequently inconsistent because teams lack precise, real-time visibility into actual coverage gaps. When gaps are clearly identified, protection conversations become structured rather than discretionary.

Even modest improvements in attachment rates can meaningfully impact annual revenue across mid-market and enterprise fleets. But most companies can't act on this because they can't see it in real time.

Why most companies miss it:

- No real-time visibility into coverage gaps
- Manual verification creates blind spots
- Decisions happen too late to affect revenue

> **In the new game, every transaction is a pricing decision.**

The revenue already exists inside your business. You're just not capturing it. Verification stops functioning as a cost center and begins functioning as a growth driver — but only when the underlying data is structured, real-time, and integrated into the rental workflow.

The Tech Shift Enabling Operational Discipline

Forward-thinking rental organizations are beginning to treat insurance verification differently — not as paperwork, but as infrastructure.

When verification becomes real-time and is integrated upstream into rental workflows, clarity replaces uncertainty:

- Coverage gaps surface immediately at the point of transaction
- Policies are validated before dispatch, not after
- Compliance can be monitored throughout the rental period
- Decisions become informed rather than reactive

Importantly, this does not add friction — it removes it. Counter teams spend less time chasing brokers. Staff spend less time interpreting ambiguous certificate language. Contractors understand their compliance status before equipment leaves the yard. Transactions accelerate because uncertainty is reduced.

Insurance verification, when implemented correctly, improves both speed and protection simultaneously. To win in this market, you need a system built for real-time trust. That system doesn't exist in most rental businesses today.

> **You can't capture what you can't see.**

A LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

The shift from manual verification to structured verification is not theoretical. It is operational. Jamie Luminais, a longtime leader in the equipment rental industry at H&E Equipment, experienced this transition firsthand by implementing the Evident Insurance Verification solution.

> *"Defining clear insurance requirements, backed fast & transparent verification created the clarity that was missing in this process. With that clarity came smoother operations and confidence in the data. Evident's automated insurance verification transformed this data into a clear, actionable signal for unlocking new revenue growth strategies."*

Jamie Luminais
Equipment Rental Industry Leader

H&E RENTALS

Her experience reflects a broader reality across the industry. When verification moves from reactive document review to proactive intelligence, it changes how rental organizations operate. Not by adding complexity. By removing uncertainty.

Your customers don't compare you to your past. They compare you to the best experience they've ever had. When a competitor's counter runs in seconds and yours runs in minutes, the gap is visible — and memorable.

The Evident Solution

The rental organizations leading the next phase are not simply those with the largest fleets. They are those that:

- Extract more revenue from each rental
- Protect more margin from each asset
- Reduce friction in every transaction
- Carry less hidden exposure

That's why Evident was built.

WHAT EVIDENT DOES	THE OUTCOME
Instant insurance verification	Faster transactions
Real-time compliance visibility	Consistent decisions across locations
Automated waiver attachment	High-margin revenue captured automatically

Evident is powered by a network of over **500,000 rental customers** — meaning that as each organization verifies, the intelligence improves for all participants. The system learns the market, not just your fleet.

The Emerging Standard

Insurance verification, once overlooked, has become a quiet structural advantage. Not because certificates matter more than they once did, but because the intelligence inside them now drives revenue, protection, and speed when it is properly structured.

The shift is already underway. The question is no longer whether insurance verification should evolve. It is whether each rental organization builds that capability independently — or participates in the shared intelligence that is already reshaping the industry.

Are you delivering that experience — or falling behind?

To learn more, visit evidentid.com/equipment-rental